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come under observation. A committee of French citizens has also been organized in close cooperation with the government, and appeals have been made to us on behalf of the work undertaken by this committee.

In response to the appeals we have received, our representatives have made a careful preliminary study of the situation, and the trustees of the Rockefeller Foundation have been so impressed with the gravity of the need that they have decided to take steps to ascertain definitely the lines along which American sympathy and generosity can be made most effective. With this end in view, they have sought to find the man who in all the country was best qualified both as a physician and as a public health administrator to study the situation in France and to determine the lines along which help could best be given.

They have had no difficulty in making up their minds that Dr. Herman M. Biggs was the man whose character and attainments best fulfilled the requirements of the case. They realized that it would be asking a great deal of Dr. Biggs to make the sacrifice involved in a visit to France, and that the state of New York had the first claim on his services. They felt, however, that if it should be the happy result of Dr. Biggs's going to France that the benefits of his long and wonderfully fruitful service in New York could be availed of in the organization of the campaign in that country, the effect in terms of human welfare would be so large and far-reaching as to constitute a very strong claim both on his public spirit and upon the generosity of the state of New York.

During Dr. Biggs's absence Dr. Linsly R. Williams, deputy commissioner, will be acting commissioner; Dr. Matthias Nicoll, Jr., now secretary of the board, will be acting deputy commissioner, and Dr. John A. Smith, at present sanitary supervisor, will act as secretary.

THE NATIONAL PARKS CONFERENCE

UNDER the auspices of the National Park Service of the Department of the Interior there was held in the auditorium of the New National Museum, Washington, D. C., on January 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6, 1917, a National Parks Conference, at which many important papers and lectures were presented. The program included:

Our National Parks: Franklin K. Lane, secretary of the interior; Senator Reed Smoot, of

Utah; Representative Scott Ferris, of Oklahoma; Representative Irvine L. Lenroot, of Wisconsin; Carl Vrooman, assistant secretary of agriculture; Enos Mills.

Canadian National Parks: J. B. Harkin, commissioner of Dominion Parks, department of the interior, Canada.

The Public and the National Parks: Huston Thompson, Jr., assistant attorney general.

University Classes in the National Parks: Professor E. M. Lehnerts, of the University of Minnesota.

Public Schools and the National Parks: Philander P. Claxton, U. S. Commissioner of Education.

National Parks as a Scientific Asset: Dr. Charles D. Walcott, secretary, Smithsonian Institution.

Teaching by Picture: Gilbert H. Grosvenor, editor, *National Geographic Magazine*.

The Painter and the National Parks: William H. Holmes, head curator, National Gallery of Art.

The Photographer and the National Parks: Fred H. Kiser.

National Forests and National Parks in Wild Life Conservation: Henry S. Graves, forester and chief, Forest Service.

The Yellowstone Elk Herds: E. W. Nelson, chief of the Bureau of Biological Survey.

Future of the Antelope: E. Lester Jones, superintendent, Coast and Geodetic Survey.

National Monuments as Wild Animal Sanctuaries: T. S. Palmer, assistant in charge of Game Preservation, Bureau of Biological Survey.

Colossus of Canyons: Representative Simeon D. Fess, of Ohio.

The Survey's Contribution to the National Park Movement: Dr. George Otis Smith, director, U. S. Geological Survey.

The Problem of the Greater Sequoia: Representative Frederick H. Gillett, of Massachusetts.

Perhaps Our Greatest National Park: Enos Mills.

The Tehipite Valley and Kings Canyon: Robert Sterling Yard.

The Top of America—Mount Whitney: Emerson Hough.

A FRENCH NATIONAL PHYSICAL LABORATORY

THE question of national laboratories of scientific research has been brought forward recently in France. In the *Comptes rendus* of the Academy of Sciences for November 13, as summarized in *Nature*, is a preliminary